

## [News story: UK steps up commitment to countering Daesh](#)

44 additional Royal Engineers will deploy to Al Asad Airbase in August, increasing the UK footprint there to over 300 and bringing the total number of British troops in Iraq to over 600. The additional personnel will construct a camp of 80 housing units, a squadron headquarters and offices, freeing up coalition personnel to support counter-Daesh operations in the wider region.

Defence Secretary, Sir Michael Fallon, said:

We are stepping up our contribution to the fight against Daesh and fulfilling Britain's role as a key player in the global coalition.

Daesh is being defeated. Iraqi forces, backed by coalition airstrikes, have now liberated 70% of the territory Daesh held and the victims of its barbarism are being helped by our humanitarian support. These extra troops will help support operations to bring the defeat of Daesh a step closer.

The troops from 5 Armoured Engineer Squadron, 22 Engineer Regiment in Tidworth, are held at readiness for just such a task. They will be deployed to Iraq for around six months and have been tasked with constructing infrastructure including accommodation and offices in the coalition camp.

The deployment will increase the number of UK personnel currently supporting the multinational effort against Daesh to over 600. They are primarily involved in training Iraqi security forces in battle winning infantry, counter-IED, engineering and combat medical skills, with over 58,000 Iraqis trained so far. In addition to personnel on the ground in Iraq, RAF aircraft have carried out around 1400 strikes against Daesh from their base in Akrotiri, Cyprus.

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## [Press release: Poultry keepers urged to take action now to prepare for winter Avian Flu threat](#)

All poultry keepers across the UK are being urged to remain vigilant to the threat of bird flu and take action now to reduce the risk to their flocks and

the wider poultry industry this winter in a joint call from the Chief Vets of Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the UK.

Simple measures can help to keep flocks disease free. All keepers – whether they run a large commercial farm or keep just a few pet chickens in their back garden – can get ahead of the game and take these simple steps to reduce the risk of disease before autumn migration of ducks and geese begins again this winter:

- Keep the area where birds live clean and tidy, control rats and mice and regularly disinfect any hard surfaces. Clean footwear before and after visits.
- Place birds' food and water in fully enclosed areas that are protected from wild birds, and remove any spilled feed regularly.
- Put fencing around outdoor areas where birds are allowed and limit their access to ponds or areas visited by wild waterfowl.
- In Great Britain, stay alert by signing up online to a free service to receive text or email alerts on any outbreaks of bird flu in the UK. You can also quickly and easily register your flock online. In Northern Ireland, visit the DAERA website for further information.

Last winter, the H5N8 strain of bird flu was found in 13 kept flocks in the UK – ranging in size from as few as nine to as many as 65,000 birds. We have seen a decline in the number of new cases over the summer, but the disease is still circulating in kept poultry across Europe, with Italy the most recent country to suffer a series of outbreaks. It has also recently been confirmed in a dead mute swan in Norfolk.

Government is working with groups including NFUs in England and Scotland, the UFU, RSPCA, British Hen Welfare Trust and Poultry Club of Great Britain to highlight the importance of keeping up high biosecurity even though the immediate disease risk has dropped.

Together, the groups are also keen to highlight the impact of bird flu on the poultry industry – a case in a backyard flock leads to the same trade restrictions in an area as an outbreak on a commercial farm, so protecting chickens in a back garden from the disease also protects farmers locally and nationally.

The UK's Chief Veterinary Officer, Nigel Gibbens, said:

While it is undoubtedly good news we haven't confirmed a case in kept birds in the UK for two months, the disease remains a threat – particularly as we move again towards the colder months.

For that reason we cannot afford to rest on our laurels and I want to remind keepers of flocks large and small to do everything they can to reduce the risk to their birds.

Simple actions you can take now, such as regularly cleaning and disinfecting the area where you keep your birds and signing up for free disease alerts, could really help to reduce the risk of your birds becoming infected this winter.

The Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales, Christianne Glossop said:

While I am sure this lack of new outbreaks will be welcomed by poultry and other captive bird keepers of both large and small flocks I would remind everyone it is vital they continue to be vigilant for signs of disease and maintain excellent biosecurity practices.

If you are concerned about the health of your birds you should seek advice from your veterinary surgeon and if you suspect that your birds have AI, you should report it to your local Animal and Plant Health Agency office.

The Chief Veterinary Officer for Scotland, Sheila Voas, said:

Given the constant risk of bird flu in the UK from wild birds, I would urge bird keepers to take some simple actions now to help reduce the chance of their birds becoming infected. These could include steps to reduce contact with wild birds, particularly on ponds and other water bodies.

One of the main challenges government faced during last year's avian influenza outbreak was being able to contact bird keepers with small numbers of birds. To stay up to date with the latest situation I would encourage bird keepers – including those who are already on the GB Poultry Register – to sign up for the Animal and Plant Health Agency free text alerts service.

Northern Ireland's Chief Veterinary Officer, Robert Huey, said:

While I welcome the lack of new outbreaks across the UK, the risk of avian influenza remains a real and constant threat. That is why it is essential that bird keepers maintain effective biosecurity all year round, not only when a prevention zone is in place.

Poultry and other bird keepers in Northern Ireland are also reminded that their birds must be registered with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs. This will ensure they

can be contacted quickly in an avian disease outbreak, enabling them to protect their flock at the earliest opportunity.

Given the recent outbreaks in wild birds in Norfolk and on the continent, there is every likelihood the disease will return this winter. Last year's outbreak is believed to have been transmitted via migratory wild birds, which means keepers need to be aware of the danger of contact between wild and kept birds and take action now.

All keepers in Great Britain can stay up to date with the latest situation by [signing up for the Animal and Plant Health Agency's free alerts service](#).

1. [A cross-Government and industry poster outlining biosecurity advice can be downloaded from GOV.UK](#).
2. Avian flu has been confirmed in [13 kept flocks and over 40 wild birds](#) between December 2016 and July 2017.
3. For more advice and regular updates on the latest situation, visit Governments' avian flu pages: in [England](#), [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [NI](#)
4. In GB, you need to [register if you keep more than 50 birds](#).
5. In Northern Ireland if you keep any birds, other than pet birds kept in the owner's home, you need to [make sure they are registered](#).
6. For more information about this press release, please contact the Defra press office on 020 8225 7318.

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## [\*\*Press release: Courts issue £177,720 in penalties to anglers\*\*](#)

The Environment Agency revealed it prosecuted 691 people for angling offences throughout April, May and June 2017. In total, courts imposed penalties of £177,720, with the highest being £974. Some 314 offenders received penalties of over £300, ten times the price of a year's legal fishing.

The most common offence was fishing without a valid licence, which could see offenders landing fines of up to £2,500 and a criminal conviction. Other offences included removing coarse fish contrary to national byelaws put in

place to protect fish stocks. During the restricted period the Environment Agency carried out 17,589 fishing licence checks and issued 963 offence reports.

Kevin Austin, our new Deputy Director for Fisheries at the Environment Agency said:

The Environment Agency and its partners take unlicensed angling very seriously. While only a minority of anglers seek to evade the law and do not buy a licence if only 5% of anglers didn't buy a £30 annual licence this would represent a loss of around £1.5m to the sport and to the environment.

Anyone fishing without a licence can expect to be prosecuted, fined and face having a criminal conviction. Obtaining a fishing licence is easier than ever and costs from just £30 for the year and remember that the junior licence is now free – there is no excuse.

Anyone who suspects illegal fishing to be taking place should report the matter to the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

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## **Notice: P022 9PH, Angus Energy Weald Basin No3 Limited: environmental permit application advertisement**

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for waste operations, mining waste operations, installations, water discharge and groundwater activities. The arrangements are explained in its [Public Participation Statement](#)

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- where you can visit to see the application documents
- when you need to comment by

The Environment Agency will decide:

- whether to grant or refuse the application
- what conditions to include in the permit (if granted)